

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 29934

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, FR

SUBJECT: ENERGY IN THE MARTINIQUE SUMMIT: VIEWS OF
BRUNET

REF: PARIS 29933

1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH ECON/COM MIN, BRUNET,
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, MFA,
SAID HE PERSONALLY
BELIEVED THAT THE GISCARD-FORD MEETING AT MARTINIQUE
WOULD PRODUCE A COMPROMISE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S.
AND FRANCE ON GISCARD'S PROPOSAL FOR A TRIPARTITE
ENERGY CONFERENCE. PUTTING IT MORE PRECISELY, HE SAID
HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE U.S. WOULD GIVE ITS APPROVAL
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TO THE IDEA OF A CONFERENCE. ADMITTEDLY THE CONFERENCE

WOULD HAVE TO BE HELD LATER THAN THE FRENCH ORIGINALLY WANTED (BUT NOT TOO FAR INTO THE FUTURE EITHER, BRUNET ADDED). ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FRENCH BELIEVED THAT THE PREPARATORY MEETING SHOULD TAKE PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE TENSION BETWEEN PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS WAS NOT DECREASING AND A PREPARATORY MEETING WOULD HELP LOWER THE TEMPERATURE.

2. ECON/COM MIN NOTED THAT THE U.S. HAD FROM THE BEGINNING ACCEPTED THE CONCEPT OF A PRODUCER-CONSUMER CONFERENCE AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME BUT HAD INSISTED THAT IT BE CAREFULLY PREPARED AND THAT THE POSITIONS OF CONSUMERS BE CONCERTED BEFOREHAND. ASSUMING THAT THE MARTINIQUE MEETING RESULTED IN AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE U.S. ON A CONFERENCE, HOW WOULD FRANCE ENVISAGE THAT ITS POSITION WOULD BE CONCERTED WITH THAT OF THE OTHER INDUSTRIAL CONSUMERS. "IN THE OECD," BRUNET REPLIED SOMEWHAT VAGUELY. BUT THEN HE CONTINUED "YOU MUST NOT PRESS US TOO HARD ON THIS QUESTION AT MARTINIQUE. IF YOU ARE GOING TO REQUIRE A CASTIRON COMMITMENT IN BLACK AND WHITE (I.E., THAT WE JOIN THE IEA), THIS WOULD BE VERY EMBARRASSING TO US AND WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU SUCH A COMMITMENT." THE GOF ACCEPTED, INDEED AGREED WHOLEHEARTEDLY, WITH THE IDEA THAT CONSUMER POSITIONS MUST BE CONCERTED IN ADVANCE OF A MEETING WITH THE PRODUCERS. BUT BRUNET PLEADED THAT WE NOT ASK THE FRENCH TO ACCEPT A PRECISE FORMULATION ABOUT HOW THIS WAS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED. THE LESS SAID ABOUT IT, THE BETTER, HE ADVISED. WE COULD BE ASSURED THAT IF WE AGREED TO HAVE THE CONFERENCE, THE FRENCH VIEW WOULD BE FULLY CONCERTED WITH THAT OF THE OTHER INDUSTRIAL CONSUMERS AND FRANCE WOULD NOT GET OUT OF LINE EITHER AT OR AFTER THE CONFERENCE. THE FACT THAT FRANCE PROPOSED THAT THE COMMUNITY BE REPRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE AS AN ENTITY RATHER THAN INDIVIDUALLY INDICATED CLEARLY ENOUGH THAT FRANCE EXPECTED TO HAVE ITS POSITION FULLY CONCERTED WITH THE OTHERS. PROVIDED THAT FRANCE'S DIFFICULTIES ON THIS POINT WERE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD, BRUNET CONCLUDED, HE THOUGHT A MEETING OF THE MINDS AT MARTINIQUE WAS HIGHLY PROBABLE.

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3. CURRENT MFA THINKING ON THE CONTENT OF A PRODUCER-CONSUMER CONFERENCE IS REPORTED IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE.

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